



City of Charleston

JOHN J. TECKLENBURG
MAYOR

WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission will be held at 6:30 p.m., on Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at the West Ashley High School Auditorium, 4060 West Wildcat Boulevard, Charleston, SC 29414.

AGENDA

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| 1. Welcome & Call to Order | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 2. Approval of Minutes from August 9, 2017 | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 3. Plan West Ashley Draft Report Presentation | |
| a. Review of revisions made based on feedback provided at the October workshop | Victor Dover, Dover Kohl & Partners |
| b. Public comment period | |
| c. Facilitated discussion with Commission Members | Jacob Lindsey, Planning Director |
| d. Commission consideration of Plan endorsement | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| e. Schedule moving forward | Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator |
| 4. January 2018 Commission Meeting | Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator |
| 5. Rules & Procedures (meeting time & place) | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 6. Other Business | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 7. Adjournment | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |

The next West Ashley Revitalization Commission meeting will be take plan at 5:00 p.m., on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at The Schoolhouse at 720 Magnolia Road, Charleston, SC 29407.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, people who need alternative formats, ASL (American Sign Language) Interpretation or other accommodation please contact Janet Schumacher at (843) 577-1389 or email to schumacherj@charleston-sc.gov three business days prior to the meeting.



PLAN WEST ASHLEY REPORT EDITS SUMMARY

The following identifies revisions made to the Plan West Ashley Draft Report based on feedback provided by the West Ashley Revitalization Commission during the September 18th workshop and the review of the first draft of the Plan. Many stakeholders and community members provided input that echoed comments provided by Commission members. The most recently revised Plan West Ashley Draft Report is dated 10.06.2017.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. All maps in every section have additional labels, information, north arrows, etc. so that community members can better understand the graphics and information presented.
2. Stronger support for I-526 completion.
3. More information regarding Church Creek drainage basin and addressing current issues.
4. One page summaries at the beginning of each chapter revised as needed to reflect changes within the chapters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Page 1.3 “A primary purpose of the Plan ... is to direct growth and maximize prosperity and other benefits while minimizing the negative impacts of any remaining future development.” As suggested by West Ashley Revitalization Commission (WARC) members, this text is in bold font and repeated in Chapter 2, page 2.20 description of plan vision.
2. 1.4 added text to provide more support for 526 completion.

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND LAND USE:

1. Page 2.3 *Chapter Overview* and 2.16. Revised sentence re: higher density to “There is a strong community belief that growth, particularly high density growth, happened in West Ashley without full regard to the infrastructure needed to support the growth and how this growth would impact the existing residential character of West Ashley.”
2. 2.20 *Preserve neighborhood character; focus new development in clear areas.*
 - New text was added to page 2.20 to addressing neighborhoods, recreation, parks and connectivity.
 - The third and fourth paragraphs are new and revisions were made to the other paragraphs as well.
3. 2.20 Incentives for ‘dead nodes’ to direct redevelopment in those areas.
 - Added text: “Future growth can be directed to these areas through new zoning standards that provide incentives for higher-density, mixed-use development in specific, targeted locations.”

4. Emphasized connection between 2.20 and 4.30 figures.
 - 2.20 Added text: “The map on the next page highlights areas where future change and improvements are anticipated and desired. Analysis of West Ashley’s infrastructure formed the foundation for this map; Chapter 4 further describes these zones as priority progress areas as suitable for “growth” or “adaptation”.
5. 2.21 To address concerns regarding preserving suburban lifestyle, single-family homes, etc., the following sentence has been emphasized in large text: “People moved to West Ashley to experience ...These existing residential housing options will not be changed or altered. Rather, the vision is to make strategic interventions in focused areas, where they can positively direct future changes...”
6. 2.24-2.28 Illustrations revised to address comments about Citadel Mall height along street frontage, parking, phasing, etc.
 - Plan and rendering graphics updates: rendering shows parking garage to accompany new development; reduced height on Orleans Rd. Plans break out an additional step, showing smaller first increment of development, to emphasize phasing/change over time.
 - Additional page 2.28 added to address parking question.
7. 2.29 *Enhance community brand and identity.*
 - This section was expanded and new text added to pages 2.29-2.30 to address ideas for enhancing community identity, signage, branding, etc.
 - Added text regarding historic corridor, promoting West Ashley as the birthplace of Charleston, gateway signage, etc.
 - Edits to page 2.29, 2.46, including “The Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other regional agencies can collaborate to improve the West Ashley brand, coordinated with other City efforts.”
8. 2.29 Regarding simple landscape maintenance to change perceptions, added: “Increased City and neighborhood efforts to clean-up trash and debris from community spaces and simple landscape maintenance on key commercial corridors can also be initiated. These actions can improve community perceptions and increase confidence.”
9. 2.30 Added text to suggest that each focus area has something that identifies it.
 - “Place-specific regulations should be established in priority areas for growth and/or preservation, so all the buildings belong together in an ensemble, while still allowing for each gateway or corridor to have its own creative architectural expression and variety.”
10. 2.30, 2.46 Regarding comments about challenges with design approval and expectations for developers and community members:
 - Edits made to page 2.30, 2.46, including “The implementation of new zoning and design standards can be overseen by a joint City/County Design Review Board (DRB) for key commercial corridors. A streamlined and improved DRB process can be established, to provide more predictability for developers as well as community members. The illustrations in Plan West Ashley (and key urban design ideas illustrated) can be used as a guide until new design guidelines that ensure activation of the street and architecture that belongs in the Lowcountry can be put into place.”
11. 2.30 Regarding Savannah Hwy needing more retail/general commercial/services to serve n’hoods (instead of more car dealerships).
 - Added text: “New regulations should be focused primarily on building form, to implement the desired community vision, and support a great mix of uses. It may be desirable to also limit

certain uses in some areas. For example, the Savannah Highway corridor contains a multitude of automobile service and sales uses; although these businesses do provide jobs and other benefits, many other neighborhood-serving uses are also needed in the area. For this reason, automobile service and sales uses should be limited to existing sites, so that other sites in the DuWap area can serve other community needs.”

12. 2.30 Added reference to Ashley Bridge District Plan for historic planning perspective.
13. Regarding undergrounding utilities, see chapter 4 *Green Infrastructure & Sustainability*.

TRANSPORTATION:

1. Stronger support for 526 completion added.
 - Added arrows to all proposed maps, all chapters.
 - Updated aerial (cover) image to show connection.
 - Updated text on page 1.4 to put additional emphasis on support.
 - Also edited the report language throughout Plan to reference “completion”.
2. 3.5 revised map title to provide traffic count clarification.
3. 3.20, 3.21, 3.24, 3.46
 - Altered the language to better emphasize the need for multimodal, shared use paths, and transit/HOV lanes for Glenn McConnell.
4. 3.27 regarding BRT study and prioritization for West Ashley:
 - A sentence was added to 3.27 second paragraph.
 - Per additional comment from BCDCOG, references to BRT was changed to LCRT.
5. 3.32 Added cross section for Saint Andrews Boulevard, Sam Rittenberg and Savannah Hwy that were developed during the charrette. The future cross section includes shared use paths, HOV and transit opportunities.
6. 3.33 Added text regarding to discussion about refuge islands/medians and signalized crossings to include Folly Road Boulevard.
7. 3.36 Added a sentences to the first paragraph referencing/emphasizing the circulator routes (similar to DASH) for West Ashley. The map on 3.37 shows the circulator path.
8. 3.38 Provided reference for 84% work commuting figure.
9. 3.42 Added a title for graphic concepts. These are proposed designs for the crossing of Bikeway at St. Andrews Boulevard.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & SUSTAINABILITY:

1. Page 4.3 *Chapter Overview* –
 - a. Added text to the end of 2nd existing conditions bullet: "The Lowcountry Land Trust and South Carolina Conservation Bank are focused on land conservation, and will be important partners moving forward."
 - b. Revised 2nd implementation bullet to "...actions (such as inclusion of green infrastructure, flood control, and undergrounding of overhead utilities into the..."
2. Church Creek drainage area is addressed (background, issues, recommendations, etc.) on pages 4.28 (recommendation) 4.36-4.37 map 'Heal' area, 4.39, 4.58, 4.67, 4.71, and 5.24.
3. 4.30-4.31 Removed floodplain line from map for clarity.
4. 4.46-4.47 Added green infrastructure callout within the vicinity of the Ashley River Bridge gateway area.

5. 4.50 Revised some of the stormwater terminology used in the table.
6. Undergrounding utilities:
 - a. 4.55 Added bullet "Require relocation of overhead utilities underground, allowing flexibility for floodplain and sea level rise constraints."
 - b. 4.69 Added immediate policies/studies bullet "Strengthen requirements for undergrounding of overhead utilities for new development and redevelopment, and pursue alternative sources and partnership models to acquire implementation funding."
 - c. 4.69 Revised immediate projects bullet #1 to read "Integrate neighborhood scale flood control, Low Country appropriate green infrastructure practices (such as bioretention, rain gardens, created wetlands, and depaving), and undergrounding of overhead utilities into upcoming....."
7. 4.58 Added credits to images.
8. 4.62-4.63 Updates to map/legend for clarity/information.
9. 4.64 Added text re: impact fees for stormwater: "Impact fees: Impact fees are enabled through state law in South Carolina and are assessed as part of development activities of a certain scale as determined by the permitting authority. For example, the Charleston Water System assesses fees to finance maintenance and expansion of water supply and sewer infrastructure. Based on flooding issues with existing infrastructure and potential future impacts, Charleston could consider an impact fee that would fund drainage improvements and acquisition of open space in West Ashley, potentially purchase of land if it were demonstrated it would be used for flood storage even if the primary purpose were a park (see Stormwater Design below). Further legal analysis is required."
10. 4.64 Added new sentence to end of #3: "The Lowcountry Land Trust and South Carolina Conservation Bank are both focused on land conservation and protection of ecological, agricultural, and historically significant resources in West Ashley and beyond, and their success can serve as a foundation for future efforts."
11. 4.65 South Carolina Code of Laws item (B) – can Charleston institute real estate transfer fees or not. Is this item (B) applicable to Charleston? Still researching this.
12. 4.66 Still need to insert examples of places in the southeast where land trusts, TDR and PDR are working.
13. 4.68 Added new stormwater management item #7 re: multi-jurisdictional coordination authority: "Investigating creation of a state drainage authority that establishes a formal process for multi-jurisdictional coordination with regards to watershed planning, stormwater management, and drainage system operation and maintenance."
14. 4.68 Flood Plain Development #1 inserted a new sentence: "Pursue and encourage adaptive solutions for retrofit of historic structures, potentially including raising, floodproofing, or relocation."
15. 4.69 Added text regarding the need for more city-county/multi-jurisdictional coordination.
 - 4.69 added to end of first paragraph: "...as well as policy actions by the City, County, BCDCOG, and others. Enhanced coordination at identified focus areas and as part of immediate action items will be critical to build a stronger pattern for successful collaboration."
 - 2.42 also includes coordination language.
16. 4.69 Adjusted order of *Immediate Projects* to move "Perform a stormwater drainage system inventory..." up.
17. 4.70 Adjusted order of *Near-Term Policies/Studies* to move "Increase budget..." up.

18. 4.70 *Near-Term Projects* and implementation matrix updated to add new item: “Explore ways to assist coordination efforts from federal programs such as FEMA and SBA to assist homeowners within flood plain that are impacted by recurring flooding.”

HOUSING:

1. Throughout chapter: more inclusive use of affordable, workforce and attainable housing stated to demonstrate housing needs at all income ranges.
2. 5.4 Minor text edits regarding terminology and history.
3. 5.10 Provided formal definition for affordable and workforce housing. Added text to include need for attainable housing for those at moderate high income levels as well.
4. 5.10 (last paragraph) and 5.11 Added text: “Additional tools exist for improving overall affordability for households of all incomes, including moderate and higher income households...” and added descriptions of other middle-income housing types (small single-family, townhouses, etc.).
5. 5.11 Added text about the income/employer/workforce/economic development roles and relationships with regards to housing attainability.
6. 5.11 Added text to better explain transportation as a component of affordability. Similar text also on 5.24.
7. 5.13 New page of content added including new text and a graph to explain existing indicators or the magnitude of demand for attainable, workforce and affordable housing. What is the demand for affordable housing?
8. 5.15 Examples of workforce housing and affordable housing in Charleston area provided.
9. 5.16 Added text to last community concern noted to include “...neighborhoods throughout west Ashley that include diverse housing opportunities at various income levels.”
10. 5.19 Added text to Low Income Housing Tax Credits section to help address.
11. 5.21 Added text describing additional potential tools to help address affordable housing needs (third party evaluation, tax revenue sources, employer assistance).
12. 5.22 *Near-Term Steps*: Added text to third bullet recommending implementation of the preexisting points from the City’s Preservation Plan be implemented.
13. 5.23 *Add more Housing Options*
 - Added text to first paragraph to explain why higher density at infill sites is beneficial.
 - Last bullet *Near-Term Steps* included additional housing options to meet housing needs – including single-family smaller lots, townhomes, etc. This was also noted in the first bullet.
14. 5.23 Added reference to fiscal benefit for service provision with regards to density (existing infrastructure, lower public service costs, etc.).
15. 5.24 *Near-Term steps*: Added action item to cross train in-the-field workers (sanitation, inspectors, Livability, zoning, etc.) to report blocked drains, drainage issues, etc. Also added to implementation matrix.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

1. 6.6. 6.10, 6.19 – Added text to identify other nodes and locations for infill development and economic development opportunities besides just Citadel Mall (i.e. Ashley Bridge District, Sam Rittenberg/Old Town area, Ashley Town Center Dr area, St. Francis/hospital area, etc.).

2. 6.16 Added text and emphasis for the need for clarity of process and guidelines for properties along key corridors under the Design Review Board purview. Need to balance zoning, design, coordination and development.
3. 6.4 Added text (last paragraph) to identify a few target sectors, in line with the One Region Plan to help establish a vision for what kind of jobs we want to attract to West Ashley (aerospace, information technology, health care and life sciences).
4. 6.18 Added text to *Immediate Steps* first bullet regarding target employment sectors; similar revisions to 6.4.
5. 6.17 Added additional text to *Longer-Term Steps* regarding TIF improvements (infrastructure, housing) to help attract private redevelopment.
6. 6.9 Added reference Cambridge Innovation Center as a model for WA.
7. 6.19 Added action item to *Longer-Term Steps* to explore reduction of business license fees as an incentive for private investment in West Ashley.
8. 6.19 Added action item to *Longer-Term Steps* to map business assets and business infrastructure (i.e. high speed cable, fiber optic, wireless) availability/needs to identify what areas that are more readily available to accommodate economic development/tech development.
9. 6.6. Added text to identify other locations for office development besides Citadel Mall. Cross-references as appropriate on 6.10 and 6.19.
10. 6.24 Incorporated Accommodations Tax funding for projects into recommendation re: comprehensive review of funding sources. Further input and research would be needed to prioritize actual direction of this revenue.
11. 6.9 Source explicitly noted regarding 84% of work commuters leaving West Ashley. Major U.S. Census Bureau dataset.
12. 6.11 and 6.15 Revised the statement for the Citadel Mall area to say “Allow and encourage transformation...”. Added this text to acknowledge that owners will likely have their own vision for the mall but the Plan has drawings to help convey illustrative redevelopment ideas supported by the City and the community.
13. 6.9 Added sentence referencing benefits of changing commute patterns and economic development to help keep people in West Ashley. Trying to ‘flip the switch’ to help improve some of the transportation issues.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX:

1. Made edits to match changes to implementation steps described for the chapters above.

WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

August 9, 2017

A meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission was held this date at The Schoolhouse, 720 Magnolia Road

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

PRESENT

Councilmember Peter Shahid, Chair, Morris Ellison, Justin Ferira, Joseph Grant, Harry Gregorie, Diane Hamilton, Donna Jacobs, Councilmember James Lewis, Michael Miller, John Osborne, Jimmy Palassis, Amy Riley, Charles Smith, Councilmember Marvin Wagner. **STAFF:** Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator, Jacob Lindsey, Director, Department of Planning, Preservation and Sustainability, Josh Martin, Senior Advisor to the Mayor, Mayor's Office, Christopher Morgan, Planning Director, Jason Kronsberg, Director, Department of Parks.

Approval of Minutes from June 14, 2017

Ms. Riley moved for approval of the minutes.

Councilmember Lewis seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Plan West Ashley – Ms. Mandi Herring

a. *Draft Report Review Process and Schedule* – Dover Kohl and their team members will deliver a copy of the West Ashley Master Plan for public review in early September. Anyone interested in reviewing the plan will have that opportunity to get it in September. Following the public review process of the plan, the West Ashley Revitalization Commission will provide comments and suggest recommendations. The Commission recommendations will go to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will consider the master plan for review and recommendations to City Council. The plan will then go to City Council who will review, approve and adopt the Master Plan.

There will be a four-month opportunity for the public to review and participate in the draft report of the master plan. Staff anticipates getting the master plan in the very beginning of September. Ms. Herring noted this process began in February. There was a lot of stakeholder input in March and April, as well as more input from the public and the Commission in April, May and June. Dover Kohl gave updates. People have been visiting the website frequently and providing information. She has been receiving emails weekly with comments for the consultants' consideration. So the public comment process is already done.

Ms. Herring said thinking forward in the next four months it is a critical time for the Commission to review this document and do their job. The success and the ultimate adoption of the plan will guide other plans that are forthcoming such as the City's Comprehensive Plan update, for the County's Comprehensive Plan update in a few years, and the City's Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

b. *September, October and November Meetings* – Staff suggests to the Commission that hold workshop session instead of a regular meeting on Monday, September 18. Staff proposed September 18 because they considered the availability of the consultants and their team members, the City's public meeting calendar (Planning Commission, City Council, and Board of Zoning Appeals), and the County's public meetings to avoid major meeting conflicts.

Ms. Herring said they also proposed to have a more intensive workshop session lasting 2 to 3 hours beginning at 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. There will be a brief presentation from the consulting teams updating the work accomplished so far and what the master plan content entails. There will be stations in the workshop containing components of the master plan – land use and design, housing, economics, sustainability, transportation and infrastructure. The Commission will have time to visit all of the stations to ask questions, make comments and have more discussion. Immediately following the workshop session will be a public workshop session that will be the same as the workshop session earlier in the day.

Staff proposes to deliver the master plan in a variety of ways – through the email, the website and social media. Hard copies will be made available to City offices, recreational buildings, libraries and County buildings, churches and neighborhoods.

Monday, September 18 will be the workshop session to provide comments to the consultants and also receive comments from the public. Staff proposes a follow up meeting later in October than the regularly scheduled meeting to give the consultants' time to take the information received in September to revise and adjust the plan, get it back out for the Commission's review and public comment review. The possible October meeting dates are Tuesday, October 17 or Wednesday, October 25 at 5 p.m. There will be a larger presentation and hopefully consideration of Commission's endorsement of the plan that evening. The Commission will have a regular meeting Wednesday, November 8 and the plan will go to the Planning Commission Wednesday, November 15. September, October and November are all opportunities for the public to comment as well. After the Planning Commission, the plan will go to City Council December 5 and December 19 for their review and approval. There will be a public hearing at City Council as well.

Ms. Herring asked the Commission members to check their schedules to see if September 18 works and decide whether October 17 or October 25 will work. The Commission has to approve the meeting changes.

Chair Shahid said the Commission needs to coordinate their schedules with the Planning Commission and City Council meetings in December. They also need to coordinate a schedule with Dover Kohl to make a presentation. He noted he received a reminder from Mr. Zucker regarding avoiding conflicts with religious holidays.

Ms. Herring added staff did check conflicts with religious holidays.

Chair Shahid said they will receive the report on September 5 and they will have two weeks to review and digest the report. Dover Kohl will be present for the workshop on September 18. The Commission will have the opportunity to ask questions, present concerns and objections of the report. Immediately following they move to a public workshop that will be similar to those charrette workshops in April and May. They will get the revised first draft of all the input and add their comments and suggestions at an October meeting and again at a meeting in November. This a three-step process before it goes the Planning Commission for their review and from there it goes to City Council.

Mr. Zucker said there was typo that listed Commission regular meeting in November as November 11, which is a Saturday. The correct date should be Wednesday, November 8.

Ms. Riley asked if they needed to choose an October date.

Chair Shahid said they could choose the date now. He surmised Dover Kohl would not be there on the October date.

Ms. Herring said they will be there on that date.

The Commission decided to meet Tuesday, October 17.

Chair Shahid asked the Commission to make a note of Planning Commission meeting date of Wednesday, November 15 as he thought they should be present at that meeting if they are able to attend.

Chair Shahid said recently they created a committee regarding identity and history. They had a lot of interest, particularly with the Maryville/Ashleyville area, and a lot of concerns with affordable housing and other issues in that area. City Council didn't vote on this as the petition got pulled but what brought it to their attention was the Ashley Hall Plantation. There was a request at one point to annex that. There has been a lot of generated interest and concern about what they did in West Ashley and he thought Ms. Hamilton and Ms. Jacobs provided a lot of insight of things as to things he overlooked with West Ashley and he appreciated the education of that.

West Ashley Identity and History – Mr. Charlie Smith, Chair, Preservation Identity Subcommittee and Ms. Donna Jacobs

Mr. Smith said while history is great stuff it has no value unless you share it. They wanted to talk about the smaller history of West Ashley and talk a little more about how to get to the bigger history.

Mr. Smith grew up on James Island and lived downtown as a teenager. He went to the College of Charleston and got a job giving tours downtown. As a part of the oral portion of the tour guide exam, all of the candidates for tour guide license were put on a bus and the person directing the oral test would stop the bus and chose one of the candidates to give a tour on whatever location they were at that time. He noted there were many people who could do that downtown but across the river there are very few. What they wanted to do is try to get people engaged and tell them a little about their experiences here, and come back together and put something together because they would like to do all of this and move forward.

Mr. Smith remarked we all tend to define ourselves based on history - where we came from, who or what brought us here and what we did while we're here. That's our history and it's our truth from our perspective. We intertwine with each other from many different places but we all came from different places too. This is the reason that cities exist because people are coming together and share resources. But at times we also separate and when we separate this is when we develop these different layers of history. We have different time periods like in the Maryville/Ashleyville area where we may be looking Native American history next to looking at the southerners who came from Barbados. You think about that in layers and the way that happens is the power shifts. Every time we have a power shift in West Ashley it has changed the whole dynamic and whole history, and added another layer to the whole history. The problem is we get so far out of line you have to look back at what all of those old histories are.

Mr. Smith asked the audience if they lived in West Ashley to write down the names of people, places, things, events and stories of those who remember about West Ashley on pieces of paper that have been provided for them. They wanted to get everyone's input to give them direction when they need to put them together.

Mr. Smith said there were a lot of shifts. Native Americans, settlers and enslaved labor changed the course of all history but there was a brief time period in West Ashley where they had slave labor, agriculture and railroads for about 10 or 15 years. That was like putting those things on steroids at that time with the access to a railroad for that kind of commerce and really changed the whole character of West Ashley again and that lasted until World War II. After World War II they exhausted the farming here and became the development for housing so the power shifts again.

Mr. Smith noted that while power hasn't shifted since the 1950s he thinks everyone present senses the mission they have. What they need to do is stop and put all of this history together. He thought it was important that they come back together in this context and put all these histories on the table at the same time for all of us to look at them together for the first time and get a real sense of who we were, who we are and who we want to be.

Ms. Jacobs brought a series of photos she obtained depicting people and places in West Ashley at various times in the past. They showed familiar areas of the area some of them were taken around 1930s up through the early 1960s. She described in the photos the locations of places, people and the orientation of those places to the current times to the audience and passed around some of the smaller sized photos for closer inspection.

Mr. Smith said one of the things they wanted was more photos from the Maryville/Ashley area. They have some information but they would like to have some photographic information as well. This is another area where you would see more layers. He said Fifth Avenue, Maryville looks like a small neighborhood street but it went to the doorstep of the royal governor's mansion and the experimental farm. Had it not been for that farm there's not a backyard garden, farm, truck farm or plantation in the southeast that would have come into existence without what was going on in Maryville in 1870 as they were the ones who figured out what was growing there commercially and what would be viable as crops. It has continued at that level of historic significance all through those hundreds of years and people needed to know that. It's important for those who live there and those that don't. It's a wonderful story but it comes out of a difficult time period and sometimes we don't like to tell the story since it came right out of Reconstruction.

These were subdivisions that were open to working people. Later Mary Just, who lived downtown on Savage Street, bought some of those lots and made them available to students if they wanted to attend the school she was going to create in Maryville. She went to Columbia and incorporated the Town of Maryville, which stayed in existence from 1886 to 1936. He said you can ride through the neighborhood

and see the houses, but nobody knows the stories. This is what they want to get today. He asked everyone to tell them the stories about places in their memory and they will all share that. He added he and Ms. Jacobs would stay after the meeting to get their impressions.

Public Comment

Sherry Irwin remarked we elected most of the Council to represent us and not to hire people. She meant no offense to those on the Commission but the Commission tells the residents they have a voice in this and then the Commission talks about regional planning committees. This is not representing us. She asked the Commission to put a stop to top down planning. She said she didn't know if how many of them have heard of Agenda 21. If not, she asked them to research it. She said they called it sustainability because it sounds better. The construction of buildings right up to the road on Highway 17 is ruining West Ashley. The apartment building built next to the West Ashley bridge is horrible and you can't see the sky. They are trying to get us out of our homes and into these high rise apartments. That is why they were talking at the last meeting about these many property owners. They want to get us out of cars. She had copies on the topic for everyone. She urged everyone to go home and research Agenda 21 for Dummies.

Ann Jenkins, president of the Northbridge Terrace Neighborhood Association, said she wasn't aware of the part of the greenway. She asked if this is why Magnolia Road was closed for drainage, is this part of the Commission and if this is why it happened.

Ms. Riley said that wasn't a part of the Commission. It had been planned years ago.

Ms. Jenkins asked if there is place they can go to see when these improvements were set up 40 years ago that are just now coming to fruition and how much of that is going to play a part into what West Ashley is going to look like. She didn't want to be caught with "her pants down" if the Commission isn't in on the situation of what's going to happen West Ashley beyond what they could possibly do here. She asked if the Commission knew what the architecture of the buildings will look like because West Ashley doesn't have a board of architecture and she wanted to know before they build the new signage in Northbridge Terrace what that architecture looks like. She questioned if they are at architecture yet and do we have architecture board so they can control what things to look like without going to the City and County Council for them to approve the buildings and the heights.

Chair Shahid suggested Mrs. Jenkins could see what projects are coming next on the website. This is a city project. The idea is the City wants to go from Forest Acres to Savannah Highway. It is designed to include the drainage. It is supposed to be a big benefit to make the water flow more efficient. The City has a Design Review Board (DRB) that is similar to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) that reviews architectural renderings of new construction. The Technical Review Committee (TRC) goes through the preliminary stages of any plan. He offered to place her on the mailing lists for those agendas so she would know what was coming up.

Mr. Smith added that the City has a commercial corridor review West Ashley.

Ms. Herring clarified that the Design Review Board reviews new construction along major commercial corridors throughout the City including West Ashley, James Island, and Johns Island. Savannah Highway, Sam Rittenberg, Wappoo Road, portions of Magnolia Road, Sycamore Avenue and St. Andrews Boulevard comes under the Design Review Board purview. All new construction any on those corridors comes under their review. The meetings are open to the public.

A resident of West Ashley asked where was the Design Board when the storage building on St. Andrews Boulevard was built. He said he spoke to Carol Hutson who told him it was a decision made at the office and no one consulted her.

Chair Shahid said one of the issues they address on a regular basis is there are several parts of West Ashley that are not incorporated into the City of Charleston. That particular property fell outside of the city limits so it didn't go before the DRB. Parts of Avondale are outside of the City limits. Some of the residents have gone to their neighborhood association meetings asking for traffic control devices on their street and they can't because half of the street is in the City and the half is not. He felt it was an issue of coordination. They needed to do a better job working with their partners in the County so that they are aware of these projects and are able to address them.

Ms. Herring added the storage building was not built under the City's design requirements. It was built under the County, who doesn't have a design review board. If it was in the city height, scale, mass, proportions, how it addresses the street and parking would all come under the design board. Mr. Smith said he was on the County Planning Commission at that time and there was an appeal process for that. Three neighborhood associations were well involved in the process as soon as it was announced the building would be built. An appeal process in place for the neighborhood associations to appeal. Not one person from those three neighborhood associations was willing to put up \$200 application fee for an appeal.

Ms. Jacobs noted because of that situation the County and City are working to coordinate things that can and cannot be built on the commercial corridors. They are talking to each other now. So because that happened there is a process. There has been a lot of board coordination between the City and County. That situation has also happened on Savannah Highway and St. Andrews Boulevard.

Ms. Herring also added after that project the County has adopted a new overlay on St. Andrews Boulevard that should address some of the designs that resulted out of that building. They have adopted ordinance requirements to address some of those design issues.

Robin Steinberg said she would like to request the TRC board hold their meetings in a bigger room. There is no space there and those are big issues they need to look at. She remarked so much of the drainage in West Ashley is not taken care and the public needed access.

Ann James said in reference to the Greenway, she wanted to know what were the rules for stopping for those areas that crossed city streets. She sees walkers, strollers, dogs, and runners with earbuds crossing the streets without looking or stopping. She wanted to know who had the right-of-way and asked that that be established.

Mr. Miller said he heard it mentioned that many plans that have already been voted on by City Council, money has been allocated for and start times have been already identified for projects in West Ashley. He appreciated the historical lesson they had today and the due diligence on providing the transportation documents that other entities are also dealing with transportation. He thought it would make good sense for the Commission to also have any information that the City is already working on, what those timelines are, when will they start construction and when they will be finished. He didn't have that information and hasn't seen it. He sees it because he lives in West Ashley so he's a recipient of the inconvenience of it but he was not on the front end of the knowledge of it.

Ms. Herring said the information is available. It is a tabbed page in the Commission members' book. The information is also available on the City's website charleston-sc.gov/westashley. There is link that gives capital improvement projects and investments that's been made in West Ashley that may goes as far back as the 1990s. Ms. Herring noted that what it probably doesn't do a good job of is tell you what is in the process, what is completed or what is coming in the next few years. She said they can work on that to provide that for them. That information is available to public. It was also provided to the West Ashley master plan consultants.

Ms. Herring said they spoke to engineering about the East Oak /West Oak Forest drainage improvements so they were not recommending something that is contrary.

Ms. Herring mentioned there are other city plans and they will work with those City staff members to keep the Commission members updated on those plans.

Chair Shahid closed the public comment period.

Mr. Ferira said it sounds like there is lot of passion about different parts of the community and how the Commission gets feedback. He applauded Ms. Herring and the City for being here. The fact that they were here and the Commission members were here is communication that we as West Ashley and you as West Ashley are their priority. While it may not have felt like the case in the past, he thought it's the physical and symbolic gesture that they care and the City is listening. He thought what could be useful is a one-on-one with City Council, BAR, BZA and DRB of what roles fall under which oversight and how do people most affected can channel feedback concerns so that West Ashley's vision concerns are channeled and communicated because he felt there is a lot of great feedback but this Commission might not be the ideal outlet in some instances. He wanted to make sure that it doesn't stop here, that it's able

to be picked up and those words and communication carry to the right ears and makes that most officially done as he knows that is the City's intent. He wanted to be sure that is doesn't with the Commission when it can be communicated.

Ms. Jacob said until the next meeting one could go to the Agenda Center on the City's website. It lists all of the boards and commissions, and lists all of their agendas, some of which had detailed information about agenda items. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Marcia L. Grant
Council Secretary